

City of San Diego
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT
Small Business Service Improvement Action Plan
September 2003

No.	Priority	Task/Issue	Responsible Person(s)	Target Date	Status
I. Customer Service:					
I.A.	Ongoing	Develop the skills of the employees through training and education.	Gary Halbert Ed Oliva		See Attached Detailed Action Plan
	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form an internal staff team of customer service stars 	Gary Halbert Ed Oliva	June 2003	Completed
	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development customer service training plans. 	Gary Halbert Ed Oliva	September 2003	Initial customer service training conducted with all supervisors. Ongoing plan being developed working with customer recognized, staff customer service "stars"
	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement training plans 	Gary Halbert	October 2003-04	Ongoing training plan still being developed
I.B.		Change structure of the department to be more responsive to Small Business development			
	Long Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study organizing staff review teams that work on small business projects to create an organization with better understanding of small business issues and needs and report back to SBAB with specific proposals 	Gary Halbert Isam Hasenin Kelly Broughton Bob Didion	February 2004	In progress-Detailed Action Plan being developed.
	Long Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study restructuring of the Information and Application Services Division to enhance responsiveness to Small Business customers 	Bob Didion Gary Halbert	February 2004	See Attached Detailed Action Plan
I.C.	Ongoing	Develop effective information delivery systems that utilize the internet, community outreach and allied organizations and agencies.			
	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare and revise information bulletins specific to Small Business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sidewalk Café Restaurants Beauty Salons 	Terry Marshall Bob Didion	June 2003	Completed
	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare Small Business Worksheet 	Terry Marshall Cynthia Queen	June 2003	Worksheet Completed, Terry Marshall available to provide assistance on specific

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		(North Park Main Street Pilot) to provide consistent structure histories and site information for specific buildings on request			sites and projects.
	Long Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop training program for small business organizations on the department and regulations applicable to small businesses 	Terry Marshall Ed Oliva	September 2003	Completed in September 5, 2003 for BID Council Reps. One being planned for broader small business audience and to become regular ongoing training program for small businesses.
	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Small Business Brochure to orient new small businesses to the department and how to approach getting their small business going. 	Terry Marshall Cynthia Queen	May 2003	Brochure Completed
	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular "Permit Press" Articles geared towards Small Business needs 	Tina Christiansen Cynthia Queen Terry Marshall	Ongoing	First Article Completed
II. System Processes:					
II.A.		Establish specialized small business intake process.			
	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assign management representative to provide early assistance services for small businesses (Include information about the service offered through small redevelopment and Economic Dev. Department paying for services via the service level agreement) 	Terry Marshall	May 2003	Completed
	Long Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create revised project submittal requirements geared towards project types typical of small business. 	Jeff Stohminger Afsaneh Ahmadi Kelly Broughton	November 2003	See Attached Detailed Action Plan
II.B.	Long Term	Guarantee access to the same plan checkers/reviewers.			
	Long Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate options for the department to provide this service based on the staff discipline and impact on overall department 	Kelly Broughton Isam Hasenin	January 2004	See Attached Detailed Action Plan

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		work program and provide a recommendation to the SBAB			
II.C.	Long Term	Guarantee access to the same inspector who will only inspect to the approved plan and not introduce new requirements.			
	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate options for the department to provide this service based on the staff discipline and impact on overall department work program and provide a recommendation to the SBAB 	Art DeBolt Isam Hasenin	October 2003	In progress
II. D.		Determine a fixed cost estimate for the entire permit process that cannot be exceeded and explain what services will be provided for this fee.			
	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete fee restructuring in light of Council Action on Department Fee Proposal 	Tina Christiansen	August 2003	Fees Adopted by Council and implemented by Department August 2003
	Long Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an automated tool that provides a more accurate cost estimate for Small Business customers Develop worksheet for use by staff to assist small businesses to answer scope questions 	Jim Myers Lila Olix Jeff Strohminger Terry Marshall Marcela Escobar-Eck Gary Halbert	December 2003	In Progress – Detailed Action Plans being developed
II.E.		Outline a realistic time frame for the permit approval process.			
	Long Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare typical project schedules for permit and approval processes common for Small Business projects 	Marcela Escobar-Eck Afsaneh Ahmadi	December 2003	See Attached Detailed Action Plan
	Long Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize new tracking system data developed over time to improve accuracy of project schedules provided to customers 	Jim Myers Gary Halbert	February 2004	See Attached Detailed Action Plan
II.F.		Incorporate Small Business representatives into Department Improvement task forces			

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate Small Business representatives on the Technical Advisory Committee. 	Tina Christiansen SBAB	May 2003	Completed
II.G.	Long Term	Revise the Department's performance measures and goals to incorporate measurements critical to Small Business and that drive Department behaviors important to Small Businesses.			
	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold internal staff and external customer stakeholder meetings to develop new performance measures. 	Gary Halbert	June 2003	Completed. TAC currently reviewing proposals
	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create final performance measures and goals. 	Gary Halbert	October 2003	In progress. Key measures being developed for TAC consideration.
	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop tools to produce reports on established performance measures and provide regular reports to stakeholder groups 	Jim Myers Alex Bragado Gary Halbert	November 2003	
III. Policy/Regulations					
III.A.	Long Term	Recommend City Council adopt a policy to have seats designated to include business representatives of the community on the Community Planning Groups.	SBAB Representatives		
III.B.	Long Term	Encourage small business members to participate on local community planning groups (through the BIDs and BIDC).	SBAB and Office of Small Business Representatives		
III.C.		Create a Small Business Smart Code Overlay Zone for small business economic enhancement projects, which would supercede all local existing codes within designated areas.			
	Long Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review "Smart Code" proposals implemented in other Cities and provide an analysis of how these might be used by San Diego. Provide pros and cons of each approach. 	Isam Hasenin Kelly Broughton	March 2004	Presentation to SBAB by Building Official on "Smart Building Code" Issues. See Attached Detailed Action Plan for "Smart Codes" for zoning and other land development code issues.
III.D.		Policy/Regulations: We			

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		observed that there are inconsistent policies throughout the code. On any given project, two plan reviewers may check the same code and focus on different provisions resulting in conflicting requirements imposed on the small business owner. There is nothing in the code that indicates that one provision supercedes the other. It is not a question of reconciling differences because both provisions are the law and both apply. In summary, the innate complexity and the internal inconsistency of the many policies that are in place can lead to multiple interpretations in a specific case.			
	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare Small Business conflict resolution process that provides for quick resolution of code issues . (Need emphasis on specific time frames, need to provide these specifics in a written form with focus on a standardized ways to communicate this to financial institutions, need to identify who.) 	Terry Marshall Art DeBolt Dan Striker	February 2004	In Progress-Detailed Action Plan being developed.
	Long Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop system to identify and collect inconsistent policies and regulations and schedule for correction via Land Development Code Update program 	Kelly Broughton	February 2004	See Attached Detailed Action Plan
III.E.		DSD has an initial deposit fee based upon the general category of the project, but until the overlay requirements are checked and the levels of review determined, the costs are indeterminate. However, this is not conveyed to the applicant. The applicant only receives requests for additional deposits.			
	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance existing permit/approval 	Afsaneh Ahmadi	December 2003	See Attached Detailed Action Plan

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		screening systems to further reduce false starts in the permit system (e.g. submitting for a building permit, but finding out later that a CUP is required)	Leslie Gossens		
	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare typical cost estimates for Small Business projects that go through the discretionary approval process along with the range of possible cost depending on project complexity and controversy. 	Kelly Broughton Alex Bragado Dan Culp	December 2003	See Attached Detailed Action Plan
III.F.		Policy/Regulations: Question was raised regarding requirements and how much of the requirements are locally imposed vs. those imposed by the State (e.g. Title 24) and Federal Government (e.g. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)). This is where the code gets very complicated. Title 24 is more restrictive than ADA but does not cover all ADA areas. Title 24 is also subjective but does not allow for mediation. ADA has many gray areas, but allows for mediation. Of the two, the most restrictive portions of each prevail. Conformity with Title 24/ADA is very challenging for businesses.			
	Long Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare public information bulletin geared towards the ADA/Title 24 challenges that typically face small business including potential project design/cost impacts and how to work with the department to resolve conflicts when they arise 	Isam Hasenin Cynthia Queen Art De Bolt	January 2004	In Progress
	Long Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Small Business focused ADA/Title 24 training program. 	Isam Hasenin	January 2004	In Progress
III.G.		Policy/Regulations: There are multiple layers of regulations			

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		<p>that a business must comply with including a Community Plan (the premier document), and most likely a Planned District Ordinance (PDO), which outlines parameters for projects that must be considered for approval on a case-by-case basis (discretionary permit process) and the Land Development Code, which is basically the zoning code. There are Five possible levels of review for projects:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Process 1 - Staff Reviewer 2. Process 2 - Staff Reviewer (Appeal to Planning Commission) 3. Process 3 – Hearing Officer (Appeal to Planning Commission) 4. Process 4 - Planning Commission (Appeal to City Council) 5. Process 5 – Planning Commission Recommendation, Decision by City Council <p>For projects in the Coastal Zone, the California Coastal Commission also may be involved for LCP amendments and appealable portions of the coastal zone. Once a project gets to a level two decision, it's a publicly noticed process and it can be appealed by anyone to a level four decision.</p>			
	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assemble the previously proposed simplifications to the Municipal Code that would have lowered the decision process for certain Small Businesses 	Kelly Broughton Scott Donaghe	October 2003	See Attached Detailed Action Plan
	Long Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct several focused Small Business forums to review previously proposed process and regulatory simplifications and to collect additional ideas for simplification 	Kelly Broughton Scott Donaghe	January - March 2004	See Attached Detailed Action Plan

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	Long Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop proposed code changes for consideration by City Council 	Kelly Broughton Scott Donaghe	April-June 2004	See Attached Detailed Action Plan
	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop information on how to break a proposed project down into smaller parts to allow short term work to proceed while the long term decisions are in process (Concurrent Processing) 	Terry Marshall Ed Oliva	November 2003	In progress – Detailed Action Plan being developed
III.H.		<p>The Planning Commission and City Council give great weight to the community planning groups when projects are subject to a level two, three, level four or level five review. There are 52 community planning areas, and 43 of them have community planning groups. There are PDOs for about 35 of the community planning areas.</p>			

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I.A. Training January 2004

1. Survey DSD employees on training needs June 2003
2. Management team evaluates survey data and provides initial direction and priorities. August 2003
3. Establish team to develop department training plan September 2003
4. Draft plan submitted for review. November 2003
5. Perform cost analysis and create draft implementation schedule. December 2003
6. Begin training program. January 2004

I.B. "Change structure of department to be more responsive to Small Business. February 2004.

1. Ongoing meetings with IAS staff to determine the best method to serve customer needs have been taking place. Meetings have occurred on April 8th and 29th, May 22nd and two additional meetings have been scheduled for June 10th and June 16th. At the final meeting in June, a recommendation will be made by the group as to whether IAS should remain as a separate Division or, through reorganization, it's duties should be assigned to other Divisions.
2. The IAS Division has been reviewing the present rotation system with the goal of providing better customer service by having staff assigned to specific functional areas (zoning, signs, water/sewer, etc.) Following the assessment of the recommendations for reorganization, IAS staff will be assigned either to new Divisions with specific areas of expertise or a new rotation system will be started in the IAS Division allowing for specialization of staff.
3. Decisions and related improvements in service delivery noted in items 1 and 2 will be implemented by February 2004.

I.C. Develop effective information delivery systems. August 2003.

1. Sidewalk Cafe Information Bulletin is presently being updated. Bulletins for Restaurants and Beauty Salons are undergoing preparation and will be completed prior to August, 2003.

II.A. Revised submittal requirements December 2003

1. Prepare list of typical small business approval and project types. October 2003
2. Develop draft submittal requirements based on the specific small business project and approval types. November 2003
3. Solicit feedback from key consultants and small business customers on revised submittal requirements. December 2003
4. Publish revised submittal requirements for January-February 2004 effective date.

II.B. Guarantee Access January 2004

1. Evaluate the ability to identify staff reviewers and supervisors on project status and issues reports September 30, 2003
2. Develop communication plan to customers so they are aware of the ability to get access to the same reviewers for their projects. October 10, 2003

3. Develop internal staff strategy to make sure staff understand guaranteed access to reviewers and to insure that if they are a new reviewer on an existing project that they touch base with prior reviewer before completing comments. New issues must be cleared by supervisor. October 10, 2003
4. Provide draft proposal for input from Small Business Advisory Board and other interest groups. September 10-November 10, 2003
5. Based on input implement final proposal January 2004.

II.E. Tracking System Data February 2004

1. Use Data obtained from task I.B. to identify potential methodology for sorting Project Tracking System data to determine typical project timelines. October 2003.
2. Policy Team reviews and approves methodology. November 2003
3. Typical processing times report created and reviewed by TAC. December 2003

III.C. Smart Codes March 2004

1. Gather copies of other jurisdictions “smart codes” for both building and zoning. June-September 2003
2. Prepare analysis of smart codes identifying pros and cons October 24, 2003
3. Present analysis to SBAB, TAC and other interest groups for input November 2003
4. Evaluate other policy interpretations to give staff more flexibility December 2003
5. Develop recommendations for future code changes. January 2003
6. Prepare Report for LU&H consideration January-March 2004

III. D. System to collect and new code changes February 2004

1. Adapt existing code issue forms to be specific to small business November 7, 2003
2. Review past code update effort for specific proposals that were not enacted that benefit small business October 20, 2003
3. Send survey to key small business leaders to have identify top regulations that impact them November 2003
4. Assemble full list of possible changes. December 2003
5. With SBAB assistance prioritize list of possible changes January 2003
6. Prepare Report for LU&H consideration to reprioritize code update work program to incorporate small business recommendations and Develop “business impact” policy for consideration by LU&H February 2004

III.E. Enhance existing permit/approval screening systems to reduce false starts. December 2003

1. Review process and determine source of errors (e.g., DPI, submittal, customer screening). September 2003
2. Formulate recommendations to fix problems. October 2003
3. Development implementation plan. December 2003

III.E. Cost Estimates for discretionary projects December 2003

1. Pick key project approval types encountered by small business projects October 2003
2. From past years data, generate average costs for these project types along with possible range of costs. Adjust costs to reflect new fee increases. December 2003
3. Publish cost ranges in a bulletin with key ways for customers to control those costs. December 2003

III.F. Policies Same as III.D. above February 2004

III.G. Policies Same as III.D. above February 2004